

Message Text

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12

ACTION EA-14

INFO OCT-01 SS-20 ISO-00 SSO-00 EB-11 SP-03 PM-07 INR-11

L-03 DRC-01 RSC-01 /072 W
----- 015369

R 220251Z AUG 74

FM AMEMBASSY VIENTIANE
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 0487
INFO AMEMBASSY BANGKOK
AMEMBASSY JAKARTA
AMEMBASSY MANILA
AMEMBASSY PHNOM PENH
AMEMBASSY RANGOON
AMEMBASSY SAIGON
AMEMBASSY SINGAPORE

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STADIS//////////

FROM AMBASSADOR TO DEPUTY SECRETARY

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: ASEAN
SUBJECT: US-ASEAN ECONOMIC CONSULTATION

REF: A. STATE 176399
B. SINGAPORE 3381

1. WHILE LAOS IS, TO DATE, ONLY PERIPHERALLY INVOLVED WITH ASEAN, WE SEE NO MAJOR REASON WHY USG SHOULD NOT ENGAGE IN CONSULTATIONS WITH ASEAN AS PROPOSED REFTEL AND IN FACT WE CAN SEE SOME POSSIBLE ADVANTAGES.

2. WE HAVE NOTED ASEAN'S EXPRESSED WILLINGNESS TO PROVIDE DEVELOPMENTAL ASSISTANCE TO THE LAO COALITION GOVERNMENT (PGNU). THIS IS A LAUDABLE OBJECTIVE AND, IF CARRIED OUT, WOULD, OF COURSE, BE HELPFUL IN REASSURING TWO SIDES IN LAOS AND CONTRIBUTING TO MAINTENANCE OF CEASEFIRE, AND

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TO IMPROVEMENT IN REGIONAL COOPERATION. HOWEVER, IT IS

EQUALLY CLEAR THAT BETWEEN CUP AND LIP FALLS THE SHADOW
OF ASEAN BEING NEITHER ORGANIZED NOR AS YET SUFFICIENTLY
DETERMINED TO UNDERTAKE ANY MEANINGFUL MULTILATERAL REGIONAL
EFFORT.

3. AS SEEN FROM HERE, ASEAN'S SCOPE REMAINS SEVERELY LIMITED
DESPITE HIGH HOPES AND GOOD WISHES WE BESTOW ON IT. PROB-
LEM OF ASEA, AS NOTED IN CERTAIN MESSAGES, IS TO DEVELOP
ENOUGH COHESION AND CONFIDENCE TO ACT AS A UNIT. UNTIL THIS
HAPPENS, WE DOUBT ASEAN QUA ASEAN WILL MAKE MUCH OF A CON-
TRIBUTION--POLITICALLY OR ECONOMICALLY--IN INDOCHINA.
THUS, THE MAIN ADVANTAGE WE SEE IN PROPOSED CONSULTATIONS
FROM OUR PERSPECTIVE IS THAT IT WOULD GIVE FURTHER IMPETUS
TO ASEAN COUNTRIES' SEARCH FOR COMMON INTERESTS AND FOR
UNITY OF PURPOSE.

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptoning: Z
Capture Date: 01 JAN 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: ECONOMIC CONDITIONS, INSTRUCTIONS, MEETINGS, POLITICAL SITUATION
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 22 AUG 1974
Decapton Date: 28 MAY 2004
Decapton Note: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: boyleja
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 28 MAY 2004
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1974VIENTI06518
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: GS
Errors: N/A
Film Number: D740231-0309
From: VIENTIANE
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1974/newtext/t19740824/aaaaauqm.tel
Line Count: 77
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Office: ACTION EA
Original Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Original Handling Restrictions: STADIS
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 2
Previous Channel Indicators:
Previous Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Previous Handling Restrictions: STADIS
Reference: A. STATE 176399
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: boyleja
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 10 JUL 2002
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: RELEASED <10 JUL 2002 by boyleja>; APPROVED <04 MAR 2003 by boyleja>
Review Markings:

Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
30 JUN 2005

Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: US-ASEAN ECONOMIC CONSULTATION
TAGS: ECON, EAID, LA, ASEAN
To: STATE
Type: TE
Markings: Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 30 JUN 2005